India Limited carried out exploratory activities and drilled a total of 11 exploratory wells, 4 in the Onland and 7 in the Offshore in the Mahanadi basin. In addition, 4 wells were also drilled in North East Coast Offshore area. However, no commercial hydrocarbon discovery was made.

Capacity utilisation of Bongaigaon Refinery

*187. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the present capacity utilisation of Bongaigaon Refinery;

(b) whether shortage of crude oil supply is the major reason for under utilisation;

(c) whether the shortage is likely to be more acute with commissioning of Numaligarh Refinery; and

(d) if so, the steps contemplated by Government to ensure full capacity utilisation of Bongaigaon Refinery and petrochemicals now and after commissioning of Numaligarh Refinery?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The capacity utilisation of Bongaigaon Refinery is likely to be about 67% during 1996-97.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) OIL and ONGC are planning to step up production of crude oil in North East, further to augment availability of crude oil for Barauni Refinery, a new crude-oil pipeline project between Haldia and Barauni is being implemented. This will facilitate higher crude availability for the refineries in Assam.

Compensating the Cooperative Institution for loan waiver scheme

*188. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether several cooperative institutions are facing financial crunch due to loan waiver schemes of the previous Government; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to fully compensate the cooperative institutions for the amount they had to pay for the waiver of loans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PALNNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI YOGINDER KUMAR ALAGH): (a) According to various studies, the problems of cooperative credit institutions basically relate to imbalances, inadequate business, high transaction cost, low margin, low recovery, mounting overdues, lack of professionalism and lack of democratic management. The Loan Waiver Scheme also dampened the recovery climate. But, the implementation of Agriculture and Rural Debt Relief Scheme helped the cooperative institutions to realise irrecoverable dues.

(b) Full and final settlement of the claims of the Cooperative Banks under Agriculture and Rural Debt Relief 1990 Scheme have been made. The Cooperative Banks received an amount of Rs. 3961 crore under ARDR Scheme-1990. Six SCBs and seven SLDBs spanning twelve States certified that there was no element of penal interest in the claims lodged by them and accordingly full amount of eligible claims was reimbursed, In States where penal interest was reported to have been included in the claims lodged, standard deduction of five percent was effected which aggregated to Rs. 169 crore.

Besides, a number of steps have been taken to improve the commerical viability of cooperative credit institutions These include:

> The Reserve Bank deregulation of the interest rate structure for lending and for raising deposits by cooperative institutions.
>
> The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Development Action Plan taking into account the performance and potential of these institutions to improve financial viability on a sustainable basis. The various strategies suggested in MOUs signed between the NABARD and the State Level Institutions include review of loan procedure, pre-sanction appraisal, recovery drive, etc.
>
> The State Governments constituting Standing Committees to decide on the strategy for ensuring adequate credit flow, monitoring and removal of bottlenecks.

Investment by MNCs for infrastructure facilities in the power sector

*189. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that multinational companies are prepared to invest for creating infrastructure facilities in the power sector both in the public and private sectors;

(b) if so, the efforts made by Government to tap such resources and install the latest technology in the power sector; and

(c) the details of offers received by Government in this regard after the liberalisation policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (c) As on date, as per inforamtion available. 56 proposals involving foreign investment from private promoters including multinational companies on the Memorandum of Understanding/Letter of Intent, etc. route costing more than Rs. 100 crores and on the competitive bidding route costing more than Rs. 1000 crores have been received for setting up power projects. The State-wise details of these projects indicating their capacity, provisional cost and name of the company are given in the Annexure. (*See Appendix 180, Anneuxre No.* 32]

Central Electricity Authority while examining proposals for setting up of power projects in the power sector for accord of techno-economic clearance as required in the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, taken into consideration the essentiality of the project, reasonableness of the tariff and the type of equipment proposed to be installed in the plant.

Salal Project

*190. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Salal Project in the Jammu region is facing a serious threat, due to problems of silting;

(b) whether this problem has been exacerbated by the closing of sluice gates provided in the original construction; and

(c) what measures are being taken to solve this problem, so that this crucial project can function with its full efficiency for a long time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) The Salal Hydroelectric Project of Natioanl Hydroelectric Power Corporation in Jammu & Kashmir experiences problems in operation in the monson months due to silt content in river Chenab which causes outages of generating units. To ensure operation of the project at full efficiency, several technical measures are being taken to improve the performance of the power stations and maximise generation. During 1996-97, generation from the Project (upto January, 1997) has been 2092 Million Units